Passenger service between Koraput and Bhubaneswar

436. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not operating the passenger services between Koraput and Bhubaneswar in Orissa;

(b) whether Government propose to introduce an express and a passenger train between these two places in Orissa; and

(c) if so, by when and the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Due to infrastructural, technical and other constraints including of manpower imposed for granting of safety clearances, there has been delay in operating the passenger service between Koraput and Bhubaneswar.

(b) and (c) It has been decided to introduce Koraput-Rayagada Link Express to Bhubaneswar during 1997-98. There is not proposal at present to introduce a passenger train between Koraput and Bhubaneswar.

Explosions in Frontier Mail, Amritsar

437. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some persons died and a number of persons were seriously injured following three explosions in the Amritsar bound Frontier Mail at Ghaziabad recently;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what is the outcome of the investigations made into the explosions in the train; and

(d) what action has been taken to strengthen the safety measures in the running trains?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

Late running of Dakshin Express

438. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Dakshin Express is usually late on arrival in Visakhapatnam from Delhi;

(b) whether it is a fact that proper scheduling has not been done to reduce the travelling time; and

(c) what steps are proposed to improve the functioning of Dakshin Express plying between Delhi and Visakhapatnam?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The punctuality of 8562 Visakhapatnam Link Express ex. Nizamuddin to Visakhapatnam has not been satisfactory and the train has reached late at Visakhapatnam on a number of occasions on account of various reasons such as accidents, agitations, alarm chain pulling, equipment failure, law and order situation and bad weather.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) All out efforts including intensive chasing and round the clock monitoring at different levels are being undertaken regularly. In addition punctuality drives are also being launched.

रेल दुर्घटनाओं की संख्या

439. **श्री राम जेठमलानी:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सत्य है कि वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान रेल दुर्घटनाओं की संख्या 398 तक पहुंच गई थी;

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो सही संख्या क्या थी तथा वर्ष 1997-98 के अक्तूबर माह तक कुल कितनी रेल दुर्घटनाएं हुई हैं;

(ग) क्या यह सत्य है कि इन सभी दुर्घटनाओं की जांच करायी गयी है; और